IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered). Please AMEND claims 1, 38 and 75 in accordance with the following:

1.   (currently amended) A message transmitting and receiving apparatus comprising:

a memory, storing keywords associated with said apparatus and degrees of importance of said keywords;

a detector, detecting an occurrence of a transmitted or received message;

an extractor, in response to the detection of an occurrence of a received message, extracting a keyword from said received message;

importance determiner unit, determining dynamically a degree of importance of said extracted keyword and updating said keywords and said degrees of importance in said memory ~~means~~ <u>such that which keywords are determined to have a relatively high importance changes in accordance with said dynamically determining</u>; and

an indicator, providing an indication of the occurrence of said extracted keyword within said received message in accordance with the determined degree of importance of said extracted keyword.

2.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said indicator providing the indication provides at least one of visual and audio indications of an occurrence of said extracted keyword in a manner determined by a degree of importance of said extracted keyword.

3.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 further comprising a deleting unit to delete a keyword having a degree of importance lower than a threshold value.

4.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said extractor further stores a new keyword extracted from a received message in said memory together with

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a degree of importance of said new keyword.

5.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said extractor extracts also a candidate keyword from a received message, and said apparatus further comprises a register storing in said memory, a candidate keyword as a keyword, together with a degree of importance of the candidate keyword, when a user of the apparatus responds to received message data containing the candidate keyword within a predetermined range.

6.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of messages.

7.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of lines.

8.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of words.

9.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of characters.

10.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

11.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 5 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

12.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit determines a degree of importance of a keyword stored in said memory, depending on whether a user of the apparatus has responded to a received message containing said keyword.

13.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit determines a degree of importance of a keyword stored in said

memory, depending on whether a user of the apparatus has responded to a received message containing said keyword within a predetermined range.

14.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of messages.

15.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of lines.

16.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of words.

17.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of characters.

18.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

19.   (original) The apparatus according to Claim 13 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

20.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit changes a degree of importance of a keyword for a predetermined time period after an occurrence of a transmitted message from a user of the apparatus.

21.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit lowers a degree of importance of a keyword for a predetermined time period after an occurrence of a transmitted message from a user of the apparatus.

22.   (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit changes a degree of importance of a keyword during a time period when a user of the apparatus is operating an input device of the apparatus and during a predetermined time period after the user stops operating the input device.

23. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit lowers a degree of importance of a keyword during a time period when a user of the apparatus is operating an input device of the apparatus and during a predetermined time period after the user stops operating the input device.

24. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit determines a degree of importance of a keyword according to schedule data of a user of the apparatus.

25. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit raises a degree of importance of a keyword according to schedule data of a user of the apparatus.

26. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit sets, in accordance with a time period, a keyword and a degree of importance thereof designated by a user of said apparatus, the degree of importance of said keyword effective during said time period.

27. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit determines a degree of importance of a keyword in accordance with the number of occurrences of the keyword in a predetermined range of received message data.

28. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of messages.

29. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of lines.

30. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of words.

31. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said predetermined

range is a predetermined number of characters.

32. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

33. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 27 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

34. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit lowers a degree of importance of a keyword when the number of occurrences of the keyword in received message data within a predetermined time period exceeds a predetermined number.

35. (previously presented) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein said importance determiner unit determines a degree of importance of a keyword in accordance with an attribute of a received message containing the keyword.

36. (original) The apparatus according to Claim 35 wherein the attribute of said received message is a network, a channel or a client.

37. Cancelled.

38. (currently amended) A program stored on a recording medium to transmit and receive messages, said program being for use in an information processing apparatus, said information processing apparatus including a processor and a memory, said program causing said processor to provide an indication of an occurrence of an extracted keyword by:

detecting an occurrence of a transmitted or received message;

extracting, in response to the detection of an occurrence of a received message, a keyword from said received message;

dynamically determining a degree of importance of said extracted keyword to update keywords associated with said apparatus and degrees of importance of the keywords stored in said memory such that which keywords

are determined to have a relatively high importance changes in accordance
with said dynamically determining; and

providing an the indication of the occurrence of said extracted keyword within said
received message in accordance with the determined degree of importance of said
extracted keyword.

39.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein the
providing the indication provides at least one of visual and audio indications of an
occurrence of said extracted keyword in a manner determined by a degree of importance
of said extracted keyword.

40.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 further
causing said processor to perform the deleting a keyword having a degree of
importance lower than a given threshold value.

41.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said
extracting includes storing, in said memory, a new keyword extracted from a received
message, together with a degree of importance thereof.

42.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said
extracting includes also extracting a candidate keyword from a received message, and
said program further causes said processor to perform the storing, in said memory, a
candidate keyword as a keyword, together with a degree of importance thereof, when
a user of the apparatus has responded to received message data containing the
candidate keyword within a predetermined range.

43.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said predetermined
range is a predetermined number of messages.

44.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said predetermined
range is a predetermined number of lines.

45.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said predetermined
range is a predetermined number of words.

46.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of characters.

47.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

48.   (original) The program according to Claim 42 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

49.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance determines a degree of importance of a keyword stored in said memory, depending on whether a user of the apparatus has responded to a received message containing said keyword within a predetermined range.

50.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of messages.

51.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of lines.

52.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of words.

53.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of characters.

54.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

55.   (original) The program according to Claim 49 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

56.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein

said determining a degree of importance includes determining a degree of importance of a keyword, depending on whether a user of the apparatus has responded to a received message containing said keyword.

57.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes changing a degree of importance of a keyword for a predetermined time period after an occurrence of a transmitted message from a user of the apparatus.

58.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes lowering a degree of importance of a keyword for a predetermined time period after an occurrence of a transmitted message from a user of the apparatus.

59.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes changing a degree of importance of a keyword during a time period when a user of the apparatus is operating an input device of the apparatus and during a predetermined time period after the user stops operating the input device.

60.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes lowering a degree of importance of a keyword during a time period when a user of the apparatus is operating an input device of the apparatus and during a predetermined time period after the user stops operating the input device.

61.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes determining a degree of importance of a keyword according to schedule data of a user of the apparatus.

62.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes raising a degree of importance of a keyword according to schedule data of a user of the apparatus.

63.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes setting, in accordance with a time period, a keyword and a degree of importance thereof designated by a user of said apparatus, the degree of importance of said keyword effective during said time period.

64.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes determining a degree of importance of a keyword in accordance with the number of occurrences of the keyword in a predetermined range of received message data.

65.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of messages.

66.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of lines.

67.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of words.

68.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined number of characters.

69.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said predetermined range is a predetermined time period.

70.   (original) The program according to Claim 64 wherein said message data within a predetermined range is messages received consecutively from a same client.

71.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes lowering a degree of importance of a keyword when the number of occurrences of the keyword in received message data within a predetermined time period exceeds a predetermined number.

72.   (previously presented) The program according to Claim 38 wherein said

determining a degree of importance includes determining a degree of importance of a keyword In accordance with an attribute of a received message containing the keyword.

73. (original) The program according to Claim 38 wherein the attribute of said received message is a network, a channel or a client.

74. Cancelled

75. (currently amended) A method to process a keyword in a message transmitting and receiving apparatus, comprising:

detecting an occurrence of a transmitted or received message;

extracting, in response to the detection of an occurrence of a received message, a keyword from said received message;

dynamically determining a degree of importance of said extracted keyword to update keywords associated with said apparatus and degrees of importance of the keywords stored in a memory such that which keywords are determined to have a relatively high importance changes in accordance with said dynamically determining; and

providing an indication of the occurrence of said extracted keyword within said received message in accordance with the determined degree of importance of said extracted keyword.

76. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 75 wherein said determining a degree of importance determines a degree of importance of a keyword stored in said memory, depending on whether a user of the system has responded to a received message containing said keyword within a predetermined range.

77. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 75 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes setting, in accordance with a time period, a keyword and a degree of importance thereof designated by a user of said apparatus, the degree of importance of said keyword effective during said time period.

78. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 75 wherein said determining a degree of importance includes determining a degree of importance of a

keyword in accordance with an attribute of a received message containing the keyword.

79.   Cancelled.